

## Grace, Truth and the Word of God

by Stella Paterson

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father,) full of grace and truth. ...For the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:1, 14, 17)*

Have you ever wondered how the "*Word was God?*" What a glorious truth is revealed in those verses! Jesus is the Living Word, full of Grace and Truth, and He has come to dwell in us. The reality of what it means to be born again becomes even more evident when the light of His Word is revealed in our hearts.

Let's look at the first verse, John 1:1, which shows us that Jesus WAS in the beginning, in the Father. Remember in Genesis how God said that "*man has become as one of us, to know good and evil*"? This means that God, the Three-in-one, created all things. His Spirit moved and brought into being everything, as we read in the account of creation. And as John 1:1 tells us, Jesus the Word was there from the start.

The second verse (John 1:14) tells us, "*And the **Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father,) full of grace and truth.*" During Jesus' few years on earth He "dwelt among" them. Before He ascended to the Father following his resurrection, He said "*...the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he **abideth with you, and shall be in you**. I will not leave you desolate. I come unto you. Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me: **because I live, ye shall live also**. In that day ye shall know that **I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you**." (John 14:17-20) Jesus died and rose again. Before He died, He dwelt among them. But now that He is risen, He dwells **in** those who put their trust in Him. "*I am the **way**, and the **truth**, and the **life**: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" John recorded those words from Jesus' lips, in John 14:6.*

The third verse (John 1:17) holds the key to something the Lord opened my eyes to see and understand. "***For the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.***" Why are those two phrases in the same sentence? There is a very good reason and this is what He showed me early this morning.

Jesus said, "*Ye search the scriptures; because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life. ...Think not that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, on whom ye have set your hope. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me: for he wrote of me.*" (John 5:39-40, 45-46)

The Old Covenant (O.T.) contained the Law. The New Covenant (N.T.) was made through Jesus' shed blood. The New replaces the Old. Jesus fulfilled the Law and every aspect of it.

Under the Law, the Pharisees were those who were well-versed in the words written in the Law of Moses. It was difficult for them to receive Jesus, even though Moses' words had all along borne witness of Him. They missed the whole point! Both Jesus and Paul explained the truth from every angle possible, yet even non-Jews often cannot come to the truth. They seem to feel they must have some law through which they can make themselves "righteous."

Now let's take a look at John 1:17:

- **"For the law was given by Moses"** – It was read in the synagogues daily, memorized religiously, obeyed meticulously (as much as possible), upheld for thousands of years, and was used by Pharisees to challenge Jesus when He spoke truth to them. The Law was foremost in their minds and in their actions. When Jesus chided them because of it, He used some pretty strong language. *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"* (Matthew 23:23, 25, 27, 29) Then in verse 33 He says, *"Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?"* The Law could never make them righteous. Nor could they use it to make anyone else righteous.
- **"...grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."** – The words in the Law and throughout scripture were just that – "words." Yes, they were inspired by the Holy Spirit and recorded by men of God but they were words nonetheless. **Jesus is the Living Word!** He is the **Way**, the **Truth**, and the **Life**. The **Way** is through Him. **Truth** is the Person Jesus who becomes our **Life**. With the Living Word dwelling in us we have all Truth because we have Him. And He IS our Righteousness.

If He is to be Everything then we have to be nothing; having gone the way of the Cross and been crucified with Christ. Only then can we know and live in the reality of this verse: *"And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things."* (1 John 2:20)

In summary, we can see how the two parts of John 1:17 say this:

- Moses' Law consisted of written words to be **abided by**. But Jesus is the Living Word who **abides in** us and we **abide in** Him. Jesus the Word is also Love and the Law was fulfilled in Him.

## **A final word about Bibles**

They come with all kinds of titles, yet all are referred to as "The Word of God." Several people have told me how confusing it is when they read the various versions and find that they all say something different. They ask, "What am I to believe?" After years of in-depth study I am convinced there is no perfect Bible version! All have been compiled by creatures of flesh - imperfect from birth. Having said that, I can assure you that Jesus is the Living Word and His Spirit of Truth will reveal JESUS - no matter which "Bible" version you pick up. I caution anyone who is seeking, do not place yourself in bondage to any written word because someone says "This is the only true words of God." Jesus is Truth, and He will reveal Himself by His Spirit within us - not separate from the written word, but through the written word. He gave us the original scriptures, the records of the gospels, and the epistles of the apostles to point us to Himself. He is the only one in Whom we should put our trust. It is idolatry to exalt any written words. For more on Bible versions read *Bible Versions and Apostasy – the Connection*.